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The war may have scared leisure travelers, but certainly not meeting planners

The two waves of NORTHSTAR Travel Media's War Impact Survey with over 20,000 US meeting planners have found the US meetings and conventions travel fared better than leisure tourism during the Iraqi War period. In the first wave of survey conducted before the War started, 72% of US meeting organizers planned to cancel or postpone the meetings to be held during the War period; however, this number declined to 58% in the second wave of survey conducted after the War broke out, indicating that corporations and associations gained confidence in travel safety and security as US troops were making progress in the battlefield.

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Jacky is an experienced strategist who specializes in creative approaches to market research. Utilizing his strong background in both qualitative and quantitative research, Jacky develops specifically tailored, innovative research methodologies, which result in strategic and actionable implications.

As Research Development Manager for NORTHSTAR, Jacky works in a wide array of research disciplines, including advertising testing, marketing tracking, economic impact analysis, and brand/image identity for the travel industry. Clients have included Pleasant Holidays, Aston Hotels, the Prince Resorts Hawaii, and the Switzerland Tourism Office.

Jacky received his MBA from the George Washington University and his BA from Hunan College of Finance and Economics.

Although leisure travel has been severely deteriorated by the war on Iraqi, the US meetings and conventions industry seemed to fare better while the US troops were making progress in the War, as revealed by NORTHSTAR Travel Media's War Impact Study that tracked the influence of the Iraqi War on meeting and convention activities in the US.

The study comprises two waves of email market surveys with over 20,000 US meeting planners. The first, which was conducted prior to the War, showed that 72% of meeting planners would cancel or postpone the meetings planned to be held during the War period. A week after the War began, this number dropped to 58%. Additionally, 7% of meeting planners indicated in the pre-War survey that they would cancel all planned meetings once the War began; however, only 3% reported they would do so after the War broke out.

Despite this apparent increase in comfort during the war, meeting planners still required a higher level of security measures for scheduled meetings and events during the War period. Prior to the War, 35% of meeting planners requested frequent security checks of meeting badges at venues and hotels. This increased to 46% after the start of the war.

With regard to future planning of international meetings during the War period, only 31% of meeting planners indicated in the pre-War survey that they would stay unchanged with original plan. Yet after the War began, this number went up to 49%. Additionally, the pre-War survey reported that 49% of meeting planners would cancel over half of international meetings, while this number dropped to 28% as suggested by the second wave of the survey.

The progress of the War appeared to have boosted meeting planners' confidence in domestic destinations as well. For example, after the War started, 29% of planners said they would cut back on domestic meetings, down from 39% just two weeks ago as reported by the pre-War survey.